


DRIVER DISTRACTION


Any activity while driving that takes the driver's attention away from driving your vehicle is just as hazardous as the driver taking their eyes off the road or hands off the steering wheel for a moment. Driver distraction is the cause of 30 percent of the 6.5 million collisions recorded nationally each year (NHTSA). The most common distractions are those when the driver is:

- ❖ Talking on a mobile/cell phone
- ❖ Drinking
- ❖ Tuning a radio/searching for or changing a Compact Disk
- ❖ Conversation with passenger's
- ❖ Reading/writing
- ❖ Personal grooming (brushing hair, putting on make-up)
- ❖ Attending to children
- ❖ Eating

Mobile/Cell Phones

Risks While Driving?	What are your options?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking on a mobile phone while driving reduces the driver's reaction times, visual search patterns, decision-making ability and their ability to control the vehicle.¹ Talking on a mobile phone while driving is just as distracting as talking with a passenger or eating while driving.² The use of a hands-free device while driving is no safer than using a hand-held mobile phone.³ 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> If your mobile phone rings while you are driving, let voicemail answer. Call back when you are in a safe location. If you need to answer, tell them you are driving and you will call back or ask them to wait until you pull over to a safe location. If you need to make a call, pull over to a safe location. 

Entertainment Systems

Risks While Driving?	What are your options?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simply listening to radio broadcasts while driving can significantly increase driver distraction and decrease driver attention.⁴ Tuning a radio station while driving significantly increases driver distraction, especially among newer drivers.⁵ Operating a Compact Disk (CD) while driving is more distracting than dialing a mobile phone or eating.⁶ Searching for or changing a CD you want to play.⁷ 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> When driving it is important to remember that as a driver your primary responsibility is to maintain and operate your vehicle. Be aware that entertainment activities that are carried out more often and for longer periods of time can result in a higher risk of driver distraction and a vehicle crash. These activities include CD or radio changing. If you are listening to a radio talk show or song that is very emotional, be aware of your own abilities and pull over to a safe location if needed. 

Personal Distractions

Risks While Driving?	What are your options?
<p>Engaging in the following significantly decreases the chance of seeing and reacting to a traffic signal, stop sign, pedestrian, or child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking to someone⁸ • Eating or drinking⁹ • Smoking¹⁰ • Putting on Make-up • Brushing your hair • Teenage Passengers, specifically due to conversation distraction and peer pressure.¹¹ 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When driving, as you talk to passengers make driving be the primary focus. Do not take part in highly emotional or controversial conversations while driving. 2. If children are riding with you and you must discipline or attend to them, first pull over to a safe location. 3. For <u>teen drivers</u>, California Law requires teen, during the first 12 months of driving, to always drive with a licensed adult and do not drive with more than one adult passenger, such as children or teens, due to distractions. 4. Put on make-up and brush your hair before or after driving. <div data-bbox="1036 331 1474 808" data-label="Image"> </div>

On-Board Navigational Systems

Risks While Driving?	What are your options?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entering destination information and reading the display, while driving is a primary distraction to the driver. But there are options you can take to reduce this risk. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Voice input and voice output systems can help reduce the distraction associated with navigational systems. These are also easier to use and safer than visual-manual entry systems.¹² 2. Navigational systems that include turn-by turn instructions, rather than complex information, are less distracting to the driver.¹³ <div data-bbox="1133 1121 1474 1432" data-label="Image"> </div>

¹ Green et al, 1993; Reed & Green, 1999

² Jeness et al, 2002; RoSPA, 1997

³ Mathews et al, 2003; Strayer & Johnston, 2001; Haigney, Taylor & Westerman, 2000; Redelmeier & Tibshirani, 1997

⁴ Jancke et al, 1994

⁵ Monash University, Accident Research Centre, November 2003

⁶ op cit

⁷ op cit

⁸ Strayer & Johnston, 2001

⁹ Stutts et al, 2001

¹⁰ Brison, 1990; Christie, 1990; Violanti & Marshall, 1996

¹¹ Williams, 2001

¹² Tijerina et al, 1998

¹³ Dingus et al, 1995